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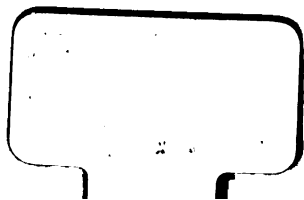
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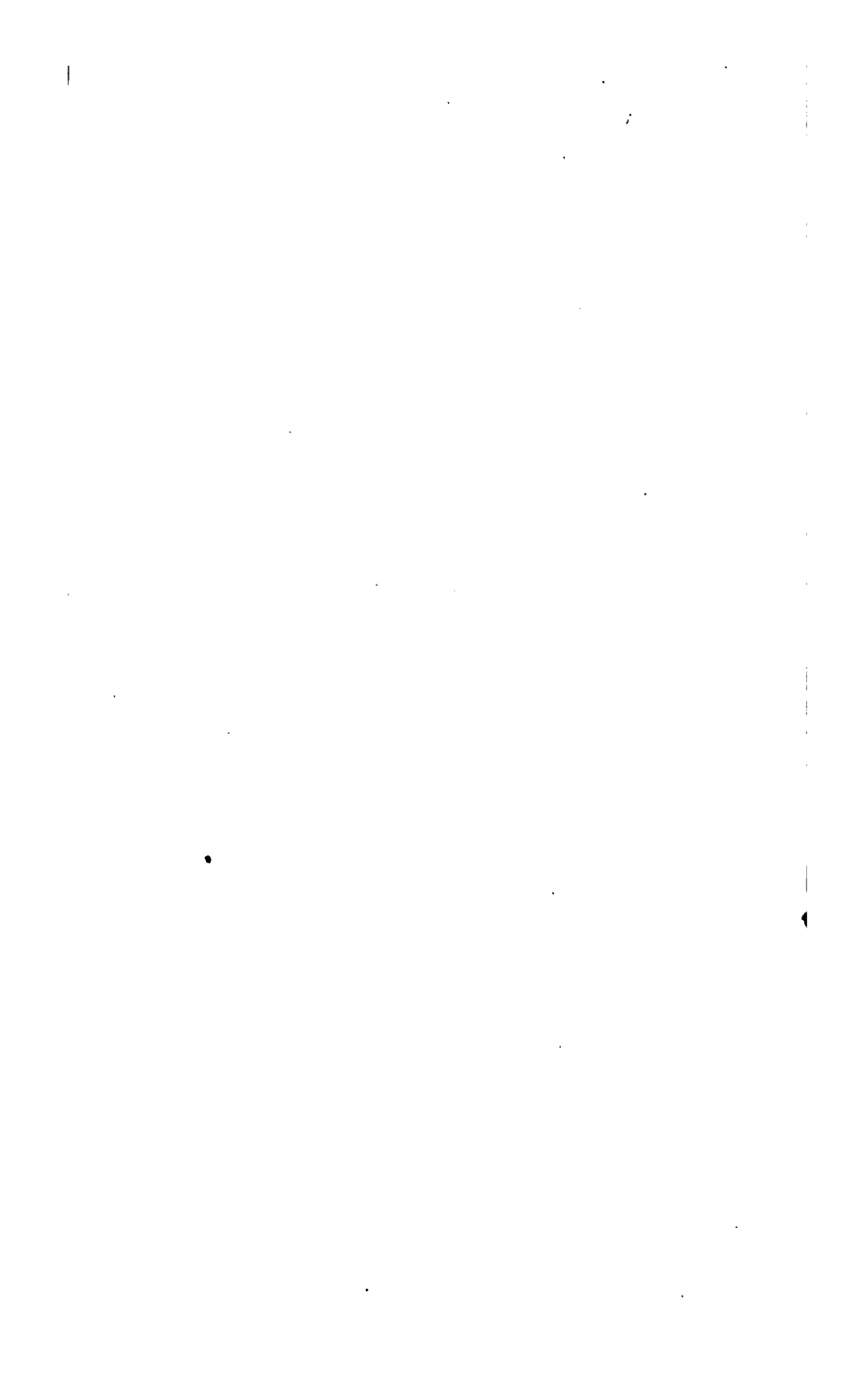
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A
L E T T E R
TO THE
Reverend Dr. *DURELL*,
VICECHANCELLOR
OF THE
UNIVERSITY of OXFORD;

OCCASIONED
By a late EXPULSION of SIX STUDENTS
from *Edmund Hall*.

By **GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M.A.**

Late of PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD;

AND

Chaplain to the Countess of HUNTINGDON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LUKE xii. 57.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not
what is right?

JOHN vii. 24.

Judge righteous judgment.

L O N D O N :

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L E T T E R
T O T H E
Reverend Dr *DURELL*.

REVEREND SIR,

BEING a Master of Israel, and placed at the head of one of the most renowned seats of Learning in the world, you need not be informed that the Mission of the HOLY GHOST is the one grand promise of the New, as the coming of JESUS CHRIST was the great promise of the Old Testament dispensation. "I will pray the Father, says our blessed LORD to his almost disconsolate Disciples, and he shall give you another Comforter." And again, "It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart (it being the Purchase of his all-atoning Blood, and designed to be

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the

the immediate fruit and proof of the reality of his resurrection, and subsequent ascension into Heaven) I will send him unto you." And that they might know that this Comforter was not to be confined to, or monopolized by Them, but was to be of standing general use, He immediately gives them intimations of the design and nature of His office : and therefore adds, " and when he is come, he will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Strange, and till then unheard-of, promise this ! Such as a Confucius, a Zoroaster, or any other fictitious uninspired Prophet or Lawgiver, never dreamt of. A promise, which none but One, who was God over all, could dare to make ; a promise which none but One, who was God over all, could possibly fulfil.

Agreeable to this promise, " having ascended up on High, led captivity captive, and received this gift for men, this divine Paraclete, this Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, came down from Heaven like a rushing mighty wind ; and there appeared cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of the Apostles."—The effects were immediate and visible.—Poor, illiterate Fishermen, instantaneously commenced Scholars, Preachers, Orators. And well they might ; for, being filled with the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit gave them utterance, they began to speak with other tongues the wonderful things of God.

But

But what was all this divine apparatus, this divine preaching, this divine oratory intended for? The following verses inform us: The hearers of those wonderful things, the spectators of this transcendently amazing scene, "were pricked to the heart, and were made to cry out, Men and Brethren, what shall we do? And the same day were added to this infant church about three thousand souls." Here were proofs, substantial, incontestible proofs, of the reality of the Resurrection, Ascension, and likewise of the efficacy of the all-powerful Intercession of their once crucified, but now exalted LORD; not only substantial and incontestible, but at the same time entirely suitable to the nature of his Mission, who in the days of his flesh by his doctrines and miracles declared, that his only design in coming into our world, was to save sinners.

Upon this rock, namely, an experimental manifestation and application of his Divinity to the renewed heart (which flesh and blood, human Reason, vain Philosophy, moral Suasion, or any, or all barely external evidence whatsoever, cannot reveal) hath he built, doth he now build, and will continue to build his church; and therefore it is that the gates, neither the power nor policy of hell, shall ever be able to prevail against it. By the influence of this almighty Agent hath he promised to be with his ministers and people, even to the end of the world. And agreeable to this, hath taught us daily to pray that his Kingdom may come; which being to be begun, carried on and completed, by one continued emanation of divine influence communicated to believers in the use of all appointed means, can alone

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enable us to do God's will on earth, with any degree of that unanimity, chearfulness, universality, and perseverance, as it is done by the holy angels above. And as this is the daily united prayer of the whole catholic church, however distressed or dispersed, and however varying as to circumstantialia and non-essentials, over the whole earth; it followeth, that every addition of any individual monument of divine mercy, out of every nation, language, or tongue, must be looked upon in part as an answer to the daily prayer of every individual believer under Heaven.

Hence, no doubt, it is, that as the angels are sent forth to be ministring spirits, to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, that there is said to be joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth. And as there is joy in Heaven, so in proportion as they rise into the nature of Angels, will there be joy also upon the same account amongst good men on earth. Accordingly the lively Oracles inform us, that "when the Apostles and Brethren which were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God, they glorified Him, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

And conformably to this, we are told, that "when Barnabas came to Antioch, and saw the grace of God, he was glad." And why? Because he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of Faith. And as the same cause will always be productive of the same effect, persons endued with the same benign and godlike disposition with this good man,

man, will always be glad when they see or hear of any scriptural marks or practical evidences of true and undefiled Religion, wrought in, or appearing upon any subject of divine grace, whatsoever. And this joy must necessarily rise, in proportion as such subjects, either by their abilities or circumstances, and situation in life, promise more important and extensive usefulness in the world and church of G O D.

No wonder therefore, Reverend SIR, that it hath gladdened the hearts of many, and afforded matter of uncommon joy and thanksgiving to the Father of mercies and GOD of all consolation, to hear, that for some time past there hath been a more than common religious concern and zeal for promoting their own and others salvation among some of the Sons of the Prophets. What a pleasing prospect hath hereby been opened of a future blessing to the rising generation ! A blessing, which we well hoped, would be not less salutary and beneficial to the moral, than the new cruse of salt, which the prophet Elisha, when complaint was made, that the water was naught and the ground barren, cast into the spring of waters, with a Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters, was to part of the natural world. “ There shall not be from thence, says the Prophet, any more death or barren land : So the waters were healed unto this day.”

But alas ! how is this general joy damped, and the pleasing prospect almost totally eclipsed, by a late melancholy scene exhibited in that very place from whence, as from a fountain, many of their

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preachers

preachers frequently and expressly pray, that pure streams may for ever flow to water the city of the living God? You need not be told, Reverend Sir, what place I mean. It was the famous University of Oxford. Nor need I mention the scene exhibited; it was a tribunal, a visitatorial tribunal, erected in Edmund-Hall—six pious Students, who promised to be the salt of the earth, and lights of the world, entire friends to the Doctrines and Liturgy of our Church, by a Citation previously fixed upon the College door, were summoned to appear before this tribunal. They did appear; and, as some were pleased to term it, were tried, convicted, and to close the scene, in the Chapel of the same Hall, consecrated and set apart for nobler purposes, had the sentence of Expulsion publicly read and pronounced against them.

So severe a sentence, in an age when almost every kind of proper discipline is held with so lax a rein, hath naturally excited a curiosity in all that have heard of it, to inquire what notable crime these delinquents may have been guilty of, to deserve such uncommonly rigorous treatment. But how will their curiosity be turned into indignation, when they are told, that they were thus rigorously handled for doing no evil at all, and that no fault could be found in them, save in the law of their God?

It is true indeed, one article of impeachment was, “that some of them were of Trades before they entred into the University.” But what evil or crime worthy of expulsion can there be in that? To be called from any, though the meanest mechanic

chanic employ, to the study of the liberal arts, where a natural Genius hath been given, was never yet looked upon as a reproach to, or diminution of, any great and public character whatsoever. Profane History affords us a variety of examples of the greatest Heroes who have been fetched even from the plough, to command armies, and perform the greatest exploits for their Country's good. And if we examine sacred History, we shall find, that even David, after he was anointed King, looked back with sweet complacency to the rock from whence he was hewn, and is not ashamed to leave it upon record, that God took him away from the sheep-folds, as he was following the ewes great with young ones; (as though he loved to repeat it) he took him, says he, that he might feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

But why speak I of David? When JESUS of Nazareth, David's LORD, and David's KING, had for his reputed father a Carpenter, and in all probability (as it was a common proverb among the Jews, "that he that did not teach his son a Trade, taught him to be a Thief;") worked at the trade of a Carpenter himself? For this indeed he was reproached and maligned; "Is not this, said they, the Carpenter's son? Nay, Is not this the Carpenter?" But who were those maligners? The greatest enemies to the power of godliness the world ever saw; the Scribes and Pharisees; that generation of vipers, as John the Baptist calls them, who upon every occasion were spitting out their venom, and shooting forth their arrows, even bitter words, against that

Son of man, even that Son of GOD, who, to display his sovereignty, and confound the wisdom of the worldly wise, chose poor Fishermen to be his Apostles; and whose chiefest of the Apostles, though bred up at the feet of Gamaliel, both before and after his call to the Apostleship, laboured with his own hands, and worked at the trade of a Tent-maker.

If from such exalted and more distant, we descend to more modern and inferior characters, we shall find, that very late, not to say our present times, furnish us with instances of some, even of our Dignitaries, who have been called from Trades that tended to help and feed the body, not only to higher employs of a spiritual nature, but even to preside over those that are entrusted with the cure of souls. And who knows but some of these young Students, though originally mechanics, if they had been suffered to have pursued their studies, might have either climbed after them to some preferment in the Church, or been advanced to some office in that University from which they are now expelled? One of the present reverend and worthy Proctors, we are told, was formerly a Lieutenant in the Army; and as such a military employ was no impediment to his being a Minister or Proctor, it may be presumed, that being formerly of Trades could have been no just impediment to these young mens becoming in process of time true Gospel-Ministers and good Soldiers of JESUS CHRIST.

Their being accustomed to Prayer, whether with or without a form, I humbly apprehend, would by
no

no means disqualify them for the private or public discharge of any part of their ministerial function. "In that day, that Gospel-day, (these last days wherein we live) saith the great God, I will pour out a Spirit of grace and a Spirit of supplication upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem." And the Apostle Paul speaks of it as the common privilege of all Believers, that the Holy Spirit helps their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered. Forms of prayer, certainly, have their use; and take it altogether, our English Liturgy is, without doubt, one of the most excellent established forms of public prayer in the world: but then, as no form, in the very nature of the thing, can possibly suit every particular case, it is to be feared that many must never pray, at least for the particular things they most stand in need of, if they are so to be tied up to their forms, that they cannot vary from them, or use free prayer at all.

The great Bishop Wilkins hath therefore wisely wrote an excellent Treatise on the benefit and importance of this kind of prayer: and could our University-youth be trained up to use proper extempore prayer, both before and after Sermon, in the opinion of all good judges, it would be as commendable, as that strange custom of putting off our auditories with what is called the *bidding prayer*; In which there is not one petition for a blessing upon the following Sermon, and scarce any thing mentioned but what hath been prayed for over and over again in the preceding common service of our church.

But

But supposing such liberty should be denied in public, as blessed be GOD it is not, surely we may be allowed, at least it cannot be deemed sinful, to use free prayer in our secret or private social exercises of devotion. If so, what sinners, what great sinners must they have been, who prayed, and that too out of necessity, in an extempore way, before any forms of prayer were or could be printed or heard of? The prayers we read of in scripture, the prayers which opened and shut heaven, the effectual, fervent, energetic prayers of those righteous and holy men of old, which availed so much with GOD, were all of an extempore nature. And I am apt to believe, if not only our Students and Ministers, but private Christians, were born from above, and taught of GOD, as those wrestlers with GOD were, they would want Forms of Prayer, though we have such a variety of them, no more than they did.

The Sick, the Lame, the Blind, the Lepers that came to our LORD for healing, wanted no book to teach them how to express their wants. Though some were only poor Beggars, and others, as the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees superciliously chose to term them, Gentile dogs, yet conscious of their wants, and having a heart-felt sense of their distress, "out of the abundance of their hearts their mouths spake;" and the compassionate IMMANUEL, who came to heal our sicknesses and bear our infirmities, sent them away with a "Go in peace, thy faith hath made thee whole: Be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

How

How unlike, yea how very unlike such a blessed dismissal is the treatment these young Students have lately met with at Edmund Hall, who, amongst other crimes of a like nature, were expelled for using Extempore Prayer. A crime not so much as mentioned in any of our Law-Books; a crime for which, in this last century at least, no one hath ever been called to the bar of any public court of judicature; and a crime for which, it is to be hoped, no Student will ever hereafter be summoned to appear and hear himself expelled for, at the bar of any of the reverend Doctors of Divinity or Heads of Houses in the University of Oxford. But should any be so infatuated as to determine, Jehu-like, to drive on thus furiously, as judgment hath unhappily begun, as it were, at the very house of God, it is to be hoped, that as some have been expelled for extempore praying, we shall hear of some few others of a contrary stamp, being expelled for extempore swearing, which by all impartial judges must undoubtedly be acknowledged to be the greater crime of the two.

Singing, composing, or reading Hymns composed by others, and doing this in company, seems to be as little criminal as praying extempore. When the last words of David are about to be recorded, he is not only stiled, "the son of Jesse, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob," but the grand title of being "the sweet Psalmist of Israel" brings up the rear. And "to teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns, and

and spiritual songs," is as truly a scriptural command, as "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself."

When Elisha the Prophet was about to prophesy before two kings, he called for a minstrel, on which he played, to sooth his ruffled passions, and prepare his heart the better for the reception of the Holy Spirit. And were the sons of the Prophets more frequently to entertain themselves thus, I believe it would be as suitable to the ministerial character, and recommend them as much, perhaps more, to all serious Christians, than their tripping up their heels, skipping and dancing at the music of a Ball-room, or playing even a first Fiddle at a concert. And was the voice of spiritual melody more frequently heard by those who come occasionally to visit our Colleges, it might be as much to the honour of the University, as the more common and too, too frequent noise of Box and Dice, at the unlawful games of Hazard and Back-gammon.

Popish countries, Popish seminaries, think it no shame, no disgrace to be heard singing the high praises of their God in their Convents, their Houses, or even in their Streets; and why Protestants in general, and Protestant Students in particular, should be any more ashamed of, or restrained from the free exercise of such acts of devotion, either in secret or in private societies, no good reason can be given; unless it be proved to be good reasoning to assert, that Protestants ought to be less devout than Papists. We must confess that Papists, though they

they take this liberty of singing and chanting privately and publicly themselves, yet deny this liberty of conscience to our Protestant assemblies, those attending divine worship at our Ambassador's chapels not excepted. But for Protestants to disuse it themselves, and at the same time lay as it were a spiritual embargo upon their fellow Protestants, nay punish and expel them for so doing, is very unaccountable.

What spirit then must those be of, Reverend Sir, who have lately joined in pronouncing the sentence of expulsion against six religious Students, not only for having been of Trades, and praying extempore, but for reading and singing Hymns also? His Royal Highness the late Duke of Cumberland, was of a very different disposition, for when abroad in Germany, in one of our late wars, (as I was informed by a person then on guard) hearing one evening as he was passing by, a company of soldiers singing at some little distance in a cave, he asked the centinel what noise that was; and being answered that some devout soldiers were singing Hymns; instead of citing them to appear before their Officers, ordering them to the whipping post, or commanding them to be drummed out of the regiment; acting like himself, he only pleasantly replied, "Are they so? Let them go on then, and be as merry as they can." In this he acted wisely; for he knew, and found by repeated experience, as did other commanding officers, that singing, nay, and praying extempore too, in these private societies, did not hinder, but rather fitted and animated these devout Soldiers to engage and to fight their Country's battles in the field. And it may be presumed, that if these Students had not
been

been expelled for singing Hymns, and praying extempore, they certainly would not have been less, but in all probability much better prepared for handling the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and fighting therewith, either from the Pulpit or the Pulpit, the battles of the LORD of hosts.

To see or hear such divine exercises treated with reproach, and spoken of with contempt by common and open blasphemers, is bad; but that any who came on purpose to be trained up for the sacred work of the Ministry, should be looked on as criminal, and expelled a University for being sometimes employed in them, is too sad a proof not only that "our gold is become dim, and our fine gold changed, but that our very foundations are out of course." What then must the righteous do?

What indeed, but weep and lament? And weep and lament indeed they must, especially when they hear further, that meeting in a religious society, giving a word of exhortation, or expounding and commenting a little now and then upon some portion of scripture, are not the least of the accusations for which some of these young worthies had the sentence of expulsion pronounced against them.

It is recorded in the Old Testament, that in a degenerate age, "those that feared the LORD spake often one to another; that the LORD hearkened and heard; and that a book of remembrance was written before him for those that feared the LORD, and thought on his name: and they shall be mine in that day, saith the LORD, when I make up my jewels;

jewels ; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Thus it was in the Old Testament times. Nor are such meetings mentioned with less approbation in the New : for therein, in order that we may hold the profession of our faith without wavering, we are commanded to " consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works ; not forsaking the assembling ourselves together, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as we see the day approaching." Nay, one immediate consequence of that grand effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, we are told, was this, namely, that " they who gladly received the word, and were baptized, continued steadfast in the Apostles doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer." This is a short, but withal a full and blessed account of the first truly apostolic primitive Church ; and we may venture to affirm, that as we are more or less partakers of a true apostolic primitive spirit, such kind of religious or fellowship-meetings, will in proportion increase or decrease among us. To talk therefore, or write, or preach against, or either by private persuasion or open violence to oppose or endeavour to suppress or discountenance such kind of religious societies, is flying, as it were, in the very face of the scriptures of truth, and of the Holy Ghost himself.

In all our charters granted by the Crown, wherein authority is given to bodies corporate to enact laws, it is always with this limitation, namely, that no laws shall be enacted by such bodies corporate contrary to the laws of the realm. And as the Scrip-
tures

tures are our grand *Codex Legum* and *Magna Charta*, in respect to our religious principles and practices, what affront must we put upon our country in general, and the church of England in particular, even by barely imagining that any law now exists that prohibits any of her members from frequenting such societies as have the divine authority and superscription so apparently stamped upon them?

The Private Meetings that are in any wise deemed and denounced illegal, are such, and such only, as are seditious, and composed of seditious persons, who associate, indeed, under a pretence of Religion, but in reality to plot against the state. The sooner any that can be convicted of this are made to forsake the assembling themselves together, the better: and though composed of a threefold, three hundred fold, nay a three thousand fold cord, no matter if, like the cords wherewith the Philistines bound Samson, they were immediately broken. But as nothing of this nature can with the least shadow of truth be objected against the Meetings and Societies frequented by these Students, but quite the contrary urged in their favour, if Scripture and the practice of the primitive Christians are to be our guides, they ought not only to be permitted, but countenanced and encouraged by every true lover of our church and nation.

And supposing in any such religious society one of them should venture now and then to drop a word of Exhortation, or even attempt in a small degree to open, expound, or enlarge upon some practical text of Scripture, how can even this be looked upon as illegal,

gal, much less sinful or worthy of expulsion, when, I could almost say, it is a necessary preparation for the future service of the sanctuary? To be apt to teach, is one indispensable qualification required by Scripture either in a Bishop or Presbyter. But how can this aptness or an habit of teaching be acquired without the exercise of previous acts? Or what business is there in the world, even from the lowest mechanic, to the highest profession amongst us, (except that of Divinity) wherein Pupils, Clerks, nay common Apprentices, are not by previous exercises trained up for a complete proficiency in their respective callings and occupations?

Our all-wise Master, we know, sent his Disciples on short excursions, before he gave them the more extensive commission to go into all the world: and were our Students in general, under proper limitations, to be thus exercised and employed, while they are keeping terms at the University, or among their poor neighbours in the country, when they return home in time of Vacation, they would not turn out such meer novices, or make such awkward figures, as too many raw creatures do when they make their first appearance in the pulpit. I remember, above thirty years ago, after some young Students had been visiting the sick and imprisoned, and had been giving a word of exhortation in a private house, that upon meeting the Ordinary and Minister of the Parish in their return to College, they frankly told him what they had been doing; upon which, he turned to them and said, "God bless you: I wish we had more such young curates." A milder, and therefore a more christian sentence this, than that of a late

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ator of the New Covenant shall come in his glory, in the glory of the Father, and his holy angels, and gather in his elect from all the four corners of the world."

But, Reverend Sir, may we not presume to hold that this voluntary speaker for the whole University whoever he be, it maketh no matter to me, was for what out and mistaken in his calculation? For seems not above three or four Doctors, if so many were present, at least sat as judges at this extraordinary tribunal. The worthy Provost of Queen's (and undoubtedly many other worthy Heads of Houses, were, and are like minded) was for prescribing more lenient methods: and all are glad to hear that these young Students worthy Principals who must necessarily be supposed to be the judge of their principles, practices, and qualifications, boldly stood up in their defence, asserted their innocence, confronted their accusers, and brought in books to vindicate both their principles and conduct. But how this worthy Principal, as well as his pupils, were treated, is best known to those who had an active hand in all.

However, as the Holy Ghost hath left it on record to the honour of Nicodemus, that he stood up in defence of our LORD before the whole Jewish Sanhedrim, and was not consenting to his death: so wherever this act of expulsion is recorded it will be, even to latest posterity will be mentioned to the honour of Doctor DIXON (and for acting thus he will have the thanks of all modes

oderate, serious, sober-minded Christians in the
ree kingdoms) that he had no hand in, but did all
possibly could to prevent these young mens ex-
ulsion. An expulsion for Articles of Impeachment
which indeed the accused pleaded guilty; but for
rticles which (wherever hereafter they may be
lled to minister in holy things) will be their best
timonial; and their expulsion for holding and con-
ting those Articles, the strongest letters of re-
mmendation.

How these young worthies are now to be disposed
or how they will dispose of themselves, as it
s not so much as hinted that they had the least
nection with me, is not my business to inquire.
t surely such an expulsion as this cannot deter
m from pursuing their preparations for their
isterial calling: friends they cannot want, be-
se “ he is faithful who hath promised, that who-
er forsaketh father or mother, houses or lands,
his sake or the gospel’s, he shall have an hundred
in this life with persecution, and in the world
ome life everlasting.” But if any act so dastardly
o make unscriptural concessions, or be terrified
unscriptural, and therefore mere *bruta fulmina*,
ey were of Trades before, the sooner they return
to their trades the better: for it is to be feared
cowards would only make a Trade of the Mi-
if they were admitted into the Church, and
wer of such kind of tradesmen our church is
led with, the safer she will be.

But

But what a mercy is it, Reverend SIR, that we live under a free Government, under a King whose Royal Grandfather repeatedly declared (and he was as good as his word through a long and glorious reign) that there should be no Persecution in his time; and under a King who in his first most gracious and never-to-be-forgotten Speech from the throne, gave his people the strongest assurances "that it was his first purpose, as the best means to draw down the divine favour on his reign, to countenance and encourage the practice of true Religion and Virtue, and maintain the Toleration inviolable."

That both Students and common People will be in danger of being tempted by such violent proceedings to put themselves under the act of Toleration, may easily be foreseen: and it may as easily be guessed how such treatment will necessarily discourage serious people from sending their sons to the University, at least to the University of Oxford; and at the same time furnish them with a new argument for entering their youth in some of our dissenting Academies, where they will be in no danger, it is presumed, of being expelled for singing Hymns, speaking a little now and then in a religious Society, or using extempore Prayer.

Alas! alas! what a disadvantageous point of light must all concerned in such an extraordinary stretch of University-discipline stand in among all foreign Universities whatsoever? In what point of light it will be viewed by our ecclesiastical Superiors at home a very little time will discover. Nay, it is to be

be feared, the discovery is made already: for by a Letter dated so lately as March 29, it appears that a certain venerable Society "on account of some circumstances that have lately happened (probably the circumstances of a late expulsion) are under a necessity of coming to a resolution to accept of no recommendation for persons to go abroad as Missionaries, but such as have had a literary Education, and have been bred up with a design to dedicate themselves to the Ministry." This resolution seems to be taken in order the better to prevent any of these cast-outs or any other laymen, however otherwise well qualified and recommended, from applying to the Society for Holy Orders, that they may be employed and sent abroad as Missionaries. But to what a sad dilemma will many serious persons be hereby reduced? They must not, by such resolutions it seems, be allowed to be Lay-Preachers, and yet if sent by their friends to the University to pursue their studies, in order that they may be regularly and episcopally ordained, if they sing Hymns, pray extempore, or give a word of exhortation in a religious Society, though entirely made up of the members of the Established church, they must be *ipso facto* expelled for so doing. *O tempora! O mores!* If matters proceed in this channel, what stamp, Reverend SIR, may we suppose our future Missionaries to the Islands and Continent will be of? To my certain knowledge all of them are not looked upon as very burning and shining lights already.—But if what little light of true Religion some may have, is to be thus damped by acts of expulsion before they leave the University, and even this little light, as far as lies in the power of man, is to be thus turned
into

into total darknefs, how great muft that darknefs be! Surely it muft be worfe than Egyptian darknefs; a darknefs that will be moft deplorably felt by all true lovers of our common falvation both at home and abroad.

You need not be apprized, Reverend SIR, that a defign for the eftablifhment of Epifcopacy in our Iflands and Plantations, hath been long upon the tapis; and that it hath been, in part at leaft, the fubject of annual Sermons for feveral years laft paft. No longer ago than in the year 1766, the prefent Bifhop of Landaff infifted upon the neceffity and expediency of it in the moft explicit manner; nay, his Lordfhip carries the matter fo far as to affure us, that this point, namely, the eftablifhment of Epifcopacy, being obtained, “the American church will go out of its infant ftate; be able to ftand upon its own legs, and without foreign help fupport and fpread itfelf: and then, adds his Lordfhip, this Society will have been brought to the happy iffue intended.” Whether thefe assertions of his Lordfhip, when weighed in a proper balance, will not in fome degree be found wanting, is not for me to determine. But fuppoſing the reasoning to be juft, and his Lordfhip’s assertions true, then I fear it will follow, that a Society, which ſince its firft institution hath been looked upon as a Society for propagating the Gofpel, hath been all the while rather a Society for propagating Epifcopacy in foreign parts: and if fo, and if it ever ſhould appear that our Right Reverend Archbifhops and Bifhops do in the leaſt countenance and encourage the unſcriptural proceedings at Edmund Hall, how muft it increaſe the prejudices

of our Colonists, both in the Islands and on the Continent, against the establishment of Episcopacy ! That persons of all ranks, from Quebec down to the two Floridas, are at this time prejudiced and more than prejudiced against it, is very notorious ; but how will the very thought of the introduction of Lords Bishops even make them shudder, if their Lordships should think proper to countenance the expulsion of such worthy and truly religious Students, whilst those who have no religion at all perhaps, may not only meet with countenance, but approbation and applause ?

Besides, if such proceedings should be continued, (which God forbid) what little credit may we suppose will hereafter be given to future University-Testimonials, namely, that the bearers of them have behaved studiously, soberly, and PIOUSLY ; and how must we in time be put under a disagreeable necessity of having a new, or at least, altering some part of our present most excellent ordination-office ? As it now stands, one of the Questions proposed to every candidate for Holy Orders runs thus : “ Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost ? ” But if all Students are to be expelled that sing Hymns, pray extempore, attend upon, or expound a verse now and then in a religious church of England Society, should it not rather, Reverend SIR, be worded thus, namely, “ Do you trust that ye are NOT inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office and administration of the church ? ”

You will excuse this freedom, Reverend SIR,

Agitur de vitâ et sanguine turni.

Love

Love to God, love to mankind in general, and love to that University, that *alma mater* where I had the honour of being educated, and, what is infinitely more, where I had, the happiness of receiving, the witness of the Spirit of God in my heart, altogether constrain me.

The news of these young mens expulsion hath made, and will make the ears of all that have heard, or shall hear of it, to tingle: and therefore if some do not speak, and use great plainness of speech too, the very stones would, as it were, cry out against us.—In respect to myself, Reverend Sir, I hope, in taking the freedom of troubling you with this, I do not justly incur the censure of acting as a busy-body in other mens matters. For, whatever other pretences may be made, such as disqualification in respect to learning, age, being of trades, &c. &c. &c. (*Nugæ tricæque calendæ*) it is notorious and obvious to all intelligent persons, that the grand cause of these young mens expulsion was this, namely, that they were either real or reputed METHODISTS. An honour this indeed unwittingly put on Methodists, whoever or whatever they be, since scarce any now-a-days can pray extempore, sing Hymns, go to Church or Meeting, and abound in other acts of Devotion, but they must be immediately dubb'd Methodists—I say, dubb'd Methodists; for it is not a name given to them by themselves, but was imposed on them by some of their fellow Students and Contemporaries in the University.

I take it for granted, Reverend SIR, that you need not be apprized that I am one of these Methodists ; and blessed be GOD I have had the honour of being one of them for about thirty-five years. If this is to be vile, may I be more vile ! If this be my shame, upon the most mature and serious reflection I really glory in it. But then lest any more innocent Youths should hereafter suffer barely for the imputation of a nick-name, give me leave simply and honestly to inform you, Reverend SIR, and through you the whole University, what not barely a reputed, but a real Methodist is :—“ He is one of those whom GOD hath chosen in CHRIST out of mankind to bring them by CHRIST to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they, which be endued with so excellent a benefit of GOD, be called according to GOD’s purpose by his Spirit working in due season : they, through grace, obey the calling : they be justified freely : they be made the sons of GOD by adoption : they be made like the image of his only begotten son JESUS CHRIST : they walk religiously in good works : and at length, by GOD’s mercy, they attain everlasting felicity.” This is the true portraiture of a Methodist, drawn at full length, drawn to the very life, and that too not by an ignorant modern dauber, but by those good old skilful scriptural limners, CRANMER, LATIMER, RIDLEY, in the xviith Article of our Church ; an Article that deserves to be written in Letters of gold ; and yet, for holding of this very Article in its literal grammatical sense, agreeable to his subscription at the time of matriculation, one of these young Students, as we have

have been informed, was expelled. If our information be wrong in this or any other respect, the nation may soon be set right by an authentic publication of the whole judicial proceedings.

If you should desire, Reverend Sir, a definition of Methodism itself, as well as of a Methodist, you may easily be gratified — It is no more nor less than faith working by love — A holy method of living and dying, to the glory of God — It is an universal morality, founded upon the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost : or, to keep to the exact terms made use of in the last Collect of our excellent Liturgy, it is the grace of our Lord Jesus CHRIST, the love of God, and the fellowship of the HOLY GHOST ; which we cannot go to church or chapel on Sundays, Holidays, or other common days, without praying, not that it may be driven from, but *be with us all evermore.*

If this be Enthusiasm, the true Methodists confess themselves to be Enthusiasts. But then, they humbly apprehend, that they cannot with any just propriety of speech be termed *modern* Enthusiasts ; for it is an Enthusiasm which our blessed Lord, in that prayer which he put up when He was about to take his farewell of his Disciples, and which is a pattern of that all-prevailing Intercession which He is now making at the right hand of God, most earnestly insists upon, and demands that all his disciples may be possessed of : “ Father, said he, I will that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am ; that they may be one with me, even as thou, O Father, and I are one : I in them, and they in me, that they all may be made perfect in one.” An Enthusiasm with

which Peter and John were fired, when "Annas the high-priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest, seeing their boldness, and perceiving that they were unlearned and ignorant men, marvelled, and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." An Enthusiasm with which the Proto-Martyr Stephen was filled, when he cried, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." An Enthusiasm which Ignatius, supposed by some to be one of those little children which the Lord Jesus took up in his arms, was absorbed in, when he styles himself a Bearer of God; and for witnessing of which good confession, in order to cure him of this Enthusiasm, was ordered by Trajan, the Roman Emperor, to be thrown to the Lions. An Enthusiasm for which Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, those glorious lights of the Reformation, those excellent compilers of our Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, were burnt alive for, near Balliol College. And to mention but one more too, too recent an example, an Enthusiasm, for being only a little tainted with which, Six Students, on March 11th, in the Year of our Lord 1768, were publicly expelled in Edmund Hall chapel.

But think you, Reverend Sir, that this is the way to stop the progress of this Enthusiasm? Or rather, may we not imagine that this very act of expulsion will be a means of furthering and promoting its progress far and near? To speak my own thoughts, I am fully persuaded, that if such unscriptural methods of stopping this Enthusiasm be pursued

sued further, it will be only like cutting off the Lyrnean head; instead of one, an hundred will spring up.

Indeed, if the Picture of modern Enthusiasts, drawn up and presented to the public by your Right Reverend Diocesan, be a just and proper one, supposing at the same time the Methodists are thereby referred to, no matter how soon they are banished out of the University, and out of the Church also: for his Lordship is pleased to tell us "that they act in direct opposition to the perverse Pharisees of old; these ascribed the works of the Holy Ghost to Beelzebub; and it is no uncommon thing for these modern Enthusiasts, adds his Lordship, to ascribe the works of Beelzebub to the Holy Spirit." Surely his Lordship, by these modern Enthusiasts, cannot mean any who apply for Holy Orders, and profess before men and angels, that "they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the office and administration of the church;" when the searcher of hearts knows that they are moved only by secular views and worldly hopes of preferment; this is indeed ascribing the works of Beelzebub to the Spirit of God with a witness: or, to use the words of a no less learned, though less censorious prelate, I mean the moderate Bishop Burnett, "it is a committing the horrid crime of Ananias and Saphira over again; it is lying, not only unto man, but unto God."

This is a modern kind of Enthusiasm, Reverend Sir, which the true old Methodists always did, and

I trust always will abjure, detest, and abhor. If worldly church-preferments had been their aim, some of them at least might have had worldly ladders enough let down to them to climb up by : but having received a kind of Apostolical commission at their Ordination, when those who profess themselves lineal successors of the Apostles, said unto them, " Receive ye the Holy Ghost now committed unto you by the imposition of our hands ; " they would fain keep up and maintain something of the dignity of an apostolic character ; and therefore without ever so much as designing to enter into any political cabals, or civil or church factions whatsoever, without turning to the right hand or the left, or troubling the world with so much as one single sermon or pamphlet on the bare externals of Religion ; they have endeavoured to have but one thing in view, namely, to determine to think of nothing, to know nothing, and to preach of nothing but JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified ; to spend and be spent for the good of souls, and to glory in nothing save in the cross of CHRIST, by whom the world is crucified unto them, and they unto the world.

It is true, by thinking and acting thus, the Methodists have been, and it is presumed always will be, charged and condemned by men of corrupt minds, as thinking and acting irregularly and disorderly : But as such a charge, in the very nature of the thing, supposes a deviation from some settled standing rule, they would humbly ask wherein the irregularity and disorderliness of this way of acting and thinking doth specifically consist ? Is it irregular

lar and disorderly to be instant in season and out of season? Is it irregular and disorderly to do so every Bishop at the very time of our being ordained? Priests, positively tells us pertaineth to their office, namely, "to seek after the children of God, scattered abroad in this naughty world?" Is it irregular and disorderly, after we have established the truth, what we deliver in our sermons by scripture, proof further to confirm and illustrate them by repeated and particular quotations, taken from the Liturgical Articles and Homilies of our Established Church? Is it irregular and disorderly to fill her Pews, crowd her Communion Tables, and to recommend a frequent and constant devout attendance upon public Offices and Services? Or, supposing it should, merely by caprice or prejudice, be denied the privilege of preaching within the Church, it be justly termed irregular or disorderly; at least it possibly be looked upon as criminal, to preach the same truths, to make use of the same kind of illustrations, to repeat the self-same recommendations without the church walls, in the fields, or any other place whatsoever?

The late candid Bishop of Lincoln, I am positive did not think such a way of acting altogether so very criminal: for in a charge given to his Clergy some years before his translation to the see of Salisbury he told them to this effect, "that they were not to look upon themselves as Ministers of a Plato, Pythagoras, or any other Heathen Philosopher, consequently they were not to entertain their auditors with mere moral harangues; but that they were

consider themselves as Ministers of JESUS CHRIST; and therefore if they would not preach the gospel in the Church, they could not be justly angry if the poor people went out to hear it in a Field." A charge this truly worthy of a sober-minded, moderate, wise Bishop of the church of England. For even in acting seemingly thus irregularly and disorderly, these modern Enthusiasts only copy after the greatest and brightest examples the world ever saw, and whose examples it is more than criminal not to follow or copy after. Our blessed LORD, when denied the use of the Synagogues, seeing the multitude, went up and chose a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for his sounding-board. At other times he sat by the sea-side, nay, went into a ship and preached, whilst the whole multitude stood on the shore. When Peter and John, that this kind of Enthusiasm might spread no further among the people, were straitly threatened, and commanded that they should thenceforth speak at all to no man in CHRIST's name, they calmly yet boldly replied unto their threatners and commanders, "Whether it be right in the sight of GOD, to hearken unto you, more than unto GOD, judge ye: For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." A certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, had her heart opened when the great Apostle of the Gentiles was preaching and praying by a river-side; and Dionysius the Areopagate, a woman named Damaris, and others, believed, and clave unto the same Apostle, from the time they heard him preach in the midst of Areopagus, or Mars hill. And we may suppose he was not less successful when he was obliged

obliged by the angry Jews to preach in the school of one Tyrannus.

I believe you will agree, Reverend Sir, that the venerable Fox and Bradford did not appear less venerable for preaching at Paul's cross; neither did I ever hear that Bishop Latimer was looked upon as degrading his episcopal character, when he used to preach out in Cotten Garden Westminster, and King Edward the Sixth, that Josiah of his age, with some of his court, leaning on velvet cushions, looked out at the palace window to hear him. And I hereby appeal to the whole University, whether the Reverend Doctors of Divinity, Heads of Houses, Graduates or Under-Graduates, ever looked upon it as criminal, or beneath the dignity of their place and station, to sit out in the open-air on St John Baptist's day, to hear a Master of Arts preach from the stone pulpit in Maudlin College yard; though for fear it may be they should give further sanction to field-preaching, they have lately thought proper to adjourn into the Chapel?

You know, Reverend Sir, who it was that, when those who were bidden in a regular way refused to come to the wedding-supper, without asking any one's leave for so doing, sent forth some irregulars into the lanes and streets of the city, into the highways and hedges, with that glorious encouraging commission, not by fines and imprisonments, not by threats and expulsions, not by killing the body for the good of the soul, but by filling their mouths with gospel-arguments, backed with the all-powerful energy

energy of the Holy Ghost, to *compel* poor, wandering, weary, heavy-laden sinners to come in. Armed with this panoply divine, and, as they think, authorised by the same LORD, some few of us continue to this day, amongst small and great, high and low, rich and poor, in Church or Chapel, in commons, streets, fields, whensoever or wheresoever divine Providence opens a door, to testify repentance towards GOD and faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST: and this not out of contempt of, or in opposition to the godly admonitions of our ecclesiastical superiors, but because "the love of CHRIST constraineth us," and we think that a wo, a dreadful wo, awaits us if we preach not the Gospel. Not that we are enemies to a decent or even episcopal consecration, or setting apart Churches and Chapels for divine and holy worship: but we are more indifferent about the reputed outward sanctity of places, because our LORD, with great solemnity, said unto the woman of Samaria, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth." Hence we infer, that every place is then, and only then, properly called holy when, like the ground around the burning bush, it is made holy by the divine presence of Him who spake to Moses out of the bush; or like mount Tabór, which by the Apostle Peter is called by way of emphasis, the Holy Mount, because himself and James and John, not only had upon that mount a visible outward manifestation,

festation, but also a blessed inward heart-felt sense of the Redeemer's excellent glory. It was undoubtedly this that made Peter break out into that exclamation: "Master, it is good for us to be here." And it was this that warmed, and not only warmed, but constrained the enraptured Patriarch Jacob, when he had only the ground for his bed, the stones for his pillow, and the open firmament for his curtains and furniture, to break forth into that extatic language, "How dreadful is this place! this is no other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."

If then, Reverend Sir, for this and such like things we are accounted irregular and disorderly; we are truly sorry for it:—Sorry but not upon our own accounts, having the testimony of a good conscience that we act with a single eye, and in direct conformity to the authority of the word of God: but we are sorry barely on account of our impeachers and condemners, especially those who being set apart for the ministerial Office, and loaded with ecclesiastical preferments, preach very seldom, or not at all; or, if they do preach now and then, preach only as though they were barely reading wall-lectures, and seldom or ever so much as mention or quote the Homilies of our Church, though they have subscribed to an Article which says, that "they contain a godly and wholesom doctrine, and which judges them to be read in Churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people." It is to be feared, that it is owing to such irregularity and disorder as this, that
when

When our people hear of our Articles or Homilies quoted by some few in the pulpit, that they are ready to cry out, "What new doctrine is this? Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears." At least if it is not so at home, I am sure it is so abroad. Hence it was that about three years ago, after I had been preaching to a very large auditory in one of the most polite places on the Continent of America, and in preaching, as is my usual custom, had strongly been recommending the book of Homilies, numbers were stirred up to go to the stores to purchase them: But upon inquiring after the book of Homilies, the Storekeeper, surprized at the novelty of the word Homilies, begged leave to know what Muslins they meant, and whether they were not Hummims.

What a pity therefore is it, Reverend Sir, that the book of Homilies, which ought to be in every hand, and as common as our Common Prayer Books, should never yet have found a place in the large catalogue of books given away by the truly laudable Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, though founded soon after the glorious Revolution. If this be not remedied some way or another, we shall very soon become disorderly indeed: our Pulpits will still continue to contradict our Reading-desks, and we shall never have the honour of being filed regular and orderly, till, regardless of Subscriptions, Oaths, Rubrics, and Ordination-Offices themselves, our practices give the lie to our professions, and we seek the fleece and not the flock, and "preach ourselves, and not CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."

Dead

Dead Formalists, and proud self-righteous Bigots, may loudly exclaim and cry out, "the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are we!" They may not only cry out, but also cast out; and thinking they thereby do God service, though most notoriously deficient in their own moral conduct, may plead conscience, and say, "Let the LORD be glorified." But to such as these our LORD once said, "Ye are they that justify yourselves before men, but GOD knoweth your hearts." Like the chief Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees of old, they may plead their Law; for the breach of which these irregulars, as they imagine, ought to be condemned and suffer; nay, time may come when they may be permitted to enforce their clamorous accusations by urging, as their godly predecessors once did against our Master, that "we found these fellows perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute unto Cæsar: but Pilate knew that for envy they delivered Him." And though they could plead their Loyalty, and say, "If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsar's friend, we have no king but Cæsar;" yet both our LORD and his Apostles rendered themselves, and strictly taught all that heard them, to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto GOD the things that are GOD's." Fain would the Methodists copy after such gloriously divine examples: and, blessed be GOD, after a trial of near forty years, upon the most severe scrutiny, their LOYALTY cannot be justly so much as once called in question: For as they fear GOD, so they
dearly

dearly love and honour their King, their rightful Sovereign King GEORGE; and have been, and continue to be, steady invariable friends to the Protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover. And if so, supposing these Methodists should be convicted of acting somewhat irregular, since it is only the irregularity of preaching and recommending unfeigned Love to God, and, for his great name sake, undissembled, disinterested Loyalty to their king; is it not the interest as well as duty of civil government, if not to encourage, yet not to oppose them? For it is certainly a most incontestable truth, that every additional profelyte to true Methodism, is an additional loyal subject to King GEORGE the Third, whom, with his Royal most amiable Consort, our gracious Queen CHARLOTTE, the Methodists with one united voice earnestly pray God long to continue to be a nursing Father and nursing Mother to our Church and People of every denomination whatsoever.

Every body is loudly complaining of the badness of our Times, and the degeneracy of our Morals. Sinners now proclaim their sin like Sodom, and the nation hath suffered more than a second deluge by an inundation of every sin, and every kind of corruption that was ever committed or practised under Heaven: "The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of our feet, we are full of wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores." Shall there no man be found then to stand in the gap? None dare to attempt at least to stem the impetuous torrent? None venture

to go out with their lives in their hand, and cry to a profane, careless, busy world, "Oh! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters?" Can any considerate, much more any real good man, be so cruel, as even to wish that the Gospel should be confined either to Church or Meeting, when there are so many thousands and tens of thousands who, as to spiritual things, know not their right hand from their left, and who never go either to Church or Meeting at all? If some are called to be settled Ministers (and may the great Head of the Church fill all our Parish-Churches and Meeting-Houses with true evangelical Pastors!) may not others be called out to be Itinerants? Have there not been Presbyters at large, even from the earliest times of Christianity? And if some of a more inferior rank and order should be qualified, and thrust forth by the great LORD of the harvest, when the harvest is so great, and the labourers so few, who shall dare to say to Him, "What dost thou?" Shall our eye be evil because he is good? If Isaiah was a Courtier, was not the Prophet Amos a Herdsman? In the days of Moses, when the Israelites were under a more immediate divine theocracy, news was brought him, and that too even by a Joshua, that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp, without his Licence or his Ordination; what doth this meek man of God say? "Envieest thou for my sake? Would to God all the LORD's people were prophets." And in the days of our LORD himself, when He was personally present, his beloved disciple John, before his heart was more enlarged by divine love, said unto him, "Master, we saw one casting out

out devils in thy name, and he followeth not with us, and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us." But what said JESUS, that good Shepherd and Bishop of Souls? "Forbid him not."

Such instances, such striking instances as these, methinks, should make even good men careful not to give way to a narrow, selfish, bigoted spirit; and caution them against joining with the world in smiting their Fellow-servants, by crying down or speaking slightly and reproachfully of a method of preaching and acting, which, maugre all opposition, for these thirty years last past hath been blessed and owned of God to the converting of thousands; not to a bare name, sect or party, or merely to head or notional knowledge, but "from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto God;" from holding the mere form, to the true abiding possession and practice of true scriptural godliness, in heart, lip, and life. But if good or bad men now dislike, and therefore oppose such an irregular way of acting, they may be told to their comfort, that their uneasiness on this account, in all probability, will not be of long continuance; for few will choose to bid, or offer themselves candidates for such airy PLURALITIES: to go thus without the camp, bearing all manner of reproach; to become in this manner, "Spectacles to God, to angels, and to men;" to sacrifice not only our natural, but spiritual affections and connections, and to part from those who are as dear to them as their own souls, in order to pass the Atlantic, and bear the colds and heats of foreign climes; these are such uninviting things to corrupt nature,

[REDACTED]

nature, that if we will have but a little patience till a few old weary heads are laid in the silent grave, these uncommon gospel-meteors, these field-phænomenas, that seldom appear in the latitude of England scarce above once in a century, without the help of any coercive means, will of themselves soon disappear. They begin to be pretty well in disrepute already: Yet a little while, and in all human probability they will quite vanish away. But though I am neither a Prophet, nor the son of a Prophet, I am greatly mistaken if, in the Redeemer's own good time and way, some spiritual phoenix will not hereafter arise, some blessed gospel-instrument be raised, that shall make the devil and his threefold army, "The lust of the Flesh, the lust of the Eye, and the pride of Life," to fly before the sound of the gospel trumpet.

I have dwelt the longer upon this particular, Reverend Sir, because the present learned Bishop of Gloucester, in his late volumes, intitled, *The Doctrines of Grace*, is pleased to observe, more than once, that he finds fault not so much with the matter, as the manner of the Methodists preaching. But if by the manner his Lordship would have us to understand, not their manner of preaching in the fields, but the manner of their delivery, whether in the church or field, I would humbly ask his Lordship, if he ever heard any of them preach? If not, doth our law condemn any man, or any set of men, unheard? And I would humbly inquire further of his Lordship, and all others whom it may concern, how they would have them or any others preach?

I re-

I remember the great Doctor Delauny, when I had the honour of being with him, many years ago, at the Right Reverend Doctor Boulter's, then Lord Primate of Ireland, among other hints, proper for a young preacher, gave me to understand, that whenever he went up into a pulpit, he desired to look upon it as the last time he should ever preach, or the last time that the people should ever hear him. O that all Preaches, whether within or without doors, however dignified or distinguished, went always up into their respective pulpits thus impressed! They would then preach as Apelles once said he painted, namely, for Eternity: They would then act the part of true gospel Christian Orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but by persuasive pathetic address endeavour to move the affections, and warm the heart. To act otherwise bespeaks a sad ignorance of human nature, and such an inexcusable indolence and indifference in the preacher, as must constrain the hearers, whether they will or not, to suspect that the Preacher, let him be who he will, only deals in the false commerce of unfelt truths.

Were our Lawyers, our Counsellors, or our Players to act thus, both the Bar and the Stage would soon be deserted; and therefore that answer of Mr Betterton, to a worthy prelate, when he asked him "how it came to pass that the Clergy, who spoke of things real, affected the people so little, and the Players, who spoke of things barely imaginary, affected them so much," is worthy of lasting regard: "My Lord, says Mr Betterton, I can assign but one reason,

reason, which is, We Players speak of things imaginary as though they were real, and too many of the Clergy speak of things real as though they were imaginary." Thus it was in his, and all know it is too much the case in our time. Hence it is, that even on our most important occasions, the worthy gentlemen concerned in our public Charities, generally find themselves more obliged to the Musicians than the Preachers, for the largeness of their collections : and hence, no doubt it is, that upon our most solemn Anniversaries, after long previous notice hath been given, when some even of our Lords Spiritual preach themselves, perhaps not two Lords temporal come to hear them.

Sorry am I therefore, Reverend SIR, to inform you, that a celebrated Orator, in one of his Lectures delivered, if I am not mistaken, in the University of Oxford, takes the liberty of saying, " That it is to be feared this is too much the state of the Pulpit-elocation in general, in the church of England : On which account, adds he, there never was perhaps a religious sect upon earth whose hearts were so little engaged in the act of public worship as the members of that Church. To be pleased, we must feel, and we are pleased with feeling. The Presbyterians are moved ; the Methodists are moved ; they go to their meetings and tabernacles with delight ; the very Quakers are moved ; fantastical and extravagant as the language of their emotions is, yet still they are moved by it, and they love their form of worship for that reason : Whilst much the greater part of the members of the Church of England, are either ban-

nished

ished from it through disgust, or reluctantly attend the service as a disagreeable duty."—Thus far Mr Sheridan.

But why go I to the Bar or Stage to fetch vouchers in defence of earnestness in heart and action, when speaking for the most High God, and offering salvation to precious and immortal souls, for whom the ever-adorable Mediator shed his precious blood? You know, Reverend Sir, the character given of Bloodsperver one of the Reformers, *Vividus vultus, vividi oculi, vivida manus denique omnia vivida*. You have also heard of a Prophet who was commanded by the LORD GOD himself to smite with his hand, and stamp with his foot; and Gospel-ministers in general are commanded to "cry aloud, and spare not, and lift up their voices like trumpets." But why refer I even to Reformers or Prophets? Rather let me mention the GOD and Saviour of all, even our Lord JESUS CHRIST, on whose manner of preaching the multitudes that followed him when he came down from the mount made this just observation, that "He spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes." And after his resurrection, when "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself," the two disciples at Emmaus said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened unto us the scriptures?" And I believe we may venture to affirm, that if preachers in general spake and opened the Scriptures more under the influence and energy of his blessed Spirit, whether in consecrated or unconsecrated

unconsecrated ground, within or without doors; they would find that their hearers hearts in a degree would burn within them too.

But I have done.—You will be so good, Reverend Sir, as to pardon not only the freedom but prolixity of this. I have already mentioned my motives for writing; and therefore shall now close with the advice given upon a similar occasion to, an ecclesiastical council by Gamaliel, a Doctor of Law, and had in reputation among all the people: “And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found to fight against God.” To this God, and the word of his *grace*, I most humbly recommend both yourself and the whole University, earnestly praying, that all at all times may have a right judgment given them in all things; I beg leave to subscribe myself,

REVEREND SIR,

Your willing Servant,

For CHRIST's sake,

LONDON,
April 12, 1768.

G. WHITEFIELD.

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